

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Your brothers in Muslim Africa blog present:

Battle of Oued El-Makhazeen⁽¹⁾ and its international dimensions:
Battle of Three Kings and the glorious victory against the crusaders

The battle of Alcácer Quibir that occurred in the 10th century A.H / 16th century, a historical event that is rich with implications, it is the clear truth that triumphed over the stammering falsehood, which is Islam that snatched a glamorous victory in that long series of crusades that targeted the land of the Muslims long ago.

Naming of the battle:

The battle had several names in the Moroccan historiographie like: Battle of Three Kings, and Battle of Alcácer Quibir, and Battle of Oued El-Makhazeen which is the name that the Moroccan historians got accustomed to use it in their books, and maybe some of the modern historians today thought to name it as a late correction “Battle of Four Kings”, because in addition to the three kings who perished in it, it was a starting point for the emergence of a fourth king whom his star was raised high in Morocco, he is Ahmed El-Mansour Eddahbi⁽²⁾.

The Saadi dynasty: the dynasty that ruled Morocco in this stage:

The Saadis who ruled the land of Morocco belong to the Saadian Sharifs from Hijaz, they are descendants of Muhammad Al-Nafs Al-Zakiyya, and the reason for their moving from Hijaz to Morocco is that the people of Draa didn't have good fruit and it had a lot of diseases, so it was said to them: “If you bring a Sharif to your land, as have the people of Sijilmasa did, then your fruit be better as theirs”, and the people of Sijilmasa had brought from the land of the Yanbu a Sharif from Alu-Al-Bayt, so the people of Draa brought Moulay Zaydan bin Ahmed, that's why it is said that the Saadian Sharifs dynasty are from Al Zaydan.

As for the reason of calling them the “Saadis”, this attribution hasn't been mentioned in their past, and it didn't appear in their records and letters, and no one dared to confront with them with this appellation, because they are attributed to it by those who criticize their lineage and impugned in their Sharif ancestry, and it is claimed that they are from Bani Saad ibn Bakr ibn Hawazin, whom which Halimah Al-Saadiyya the wet-nurse of the messenger of Allah – peace and blessings of Allah be upon him – belongs to and many of the populace believe that they were called so because the people were happy from them.

Saadian dynasty was established after the Wattasid dynasty so it fell upon them the burden of the mission of jihad against the Portuguese who controlled the shores of Al-Maghrib Al-Aqsá.

After the death of Al-Ghalibillah the Baya'a was given to his son Mohammed who called himself “Al-Mutawakkil ‘Alā Allāh”, and he was a Rude harsh oppressive tyrant who killed two of his brothers when he reached to power, and order for another one to be imprisoned, so the people hated him, especially that the throne is handed over to most senior Amirs of the family, that's why his uncle Abdul-Malik saw that he was more worthy of the throne from his nephew,

so Al-Mutawakkil intended to eliminate his two uncles Abdal-Malik and Ahmed, so they fled to seek assistance from the Ottomans.

Al-Mutawakkil was described as a man of Fiqh, literature and good rhetoric in poetry and prose, but despite of that he was arrogant unconcerned of anyone, had no restrictions in shedding blood, and an oppressor to the people, and from his poetry:

(Arabic poetry)

As for his uncle Abdul-Malik he had virtuous characteristics and a good reputation, brought together knowledge and bravery, and he was a skillful politician, he mastered several European and Eastern languages, his mother “Sahaba Al-Rahmaniyah” took him with his brother Ahmed to Algeria, and the Ottoman governor prepared the means to travel to Al-Asitana, where he sought refuge from sultan Salim son of Suleiman asking for his aid and support, but Sultan Salim neglected him until he sent a naval fleet to conquer Tunisia, liberate it from the Hafsids who sought assistance from the Spaniards, and that naval fleet managed to achieve its goal, and Al-Hassan bin Mohammed Al-Hafsi fled to Castile, after the capture of Tunisia by “Hayreddin Barbarossa”, and Abdul-Malik was among those who witnessed it, he returned with the good news to the Ottoman sultan he accepted his request of assistance, and wrote an order to Al-Dolatti governor of Algeria to send with him five thousand Turkish soldier, to enter with him the land of Al-Maghrib Al-Aqsá, to give him back his right to rule, and when Abdul-Malik entered Morocco with the Turks, he wrote to the entourage of Al-Mutawakkil, and the commanders of his soldiers, giving promises to who obeys and threatening who disobeys, and victory was for Abdul-Malik in a battle near Fez, and Al-Mutawakkil fled from the battlefield, and that was the reason for the end of his reign and the beginning of the reign of his uncle, and Abdul-Malik entered Fez on Sunday 7 Dhu Al-Hijjah 983 A.H., and then he captured Marrakech, so Al-Mutawakkil fled to the Sous mountains, and began to move between its tribes and neighborhoods, until a group of brats gathered around him, and formed something like an army and they were deceived by his illusions and promises and led them to Marrakech and entered it, but Ahmed Abdul-Malik’s brother came from Fez so Al-Mutawakkil once again fled to Sous, and from it to Ceuta then he entered Tangier seeking the assistance of the king of Portugal, so that was one of the reasons of the battle of Alcácer Quibir⁽³⁾.

A battle between two parties:

The battle to the Moroccans was a battle of Furqan:

Most of the Moroccan narrators and historians resembled the battle of Alcácer Quibir to the Ghazwa of Badr, which was victory to Islam and the Muhammadan religion, and the Fuqaha rejoiced for that victory and saw in the death of three kings a symbol for the defeat of the trinity, and that was mentioned by the Moroccans in their prose and poetry, and Ibn Al-Qadi pointed out in his book “Durat Al-Hijal fi Asmaa Al-Rijal”, to that matter in astonishment by saying: “Look

at the wisdom of Allah the Subduer! He perished three kings in one day, and inaugurated one”, and in a poem for Abu Abdullah Mohammed bin Ali we read:

(Arabic poetry)

Swords were unsheathed for the Sake of Allah, striking while the helpless are sleeping

Trinity was hit with it a fatal strike, so the cross couldn't stand on its feet

And it rained bullets and arrows on the enemies at “El-Makhazeen”⁽⁴⁾

The battle to the Portuguese was a punishment from Allah:

The Portuguese sources and documents addressed the battle from a pessimistic religious view, which is contrary to the Moroccan and Islamic sources, the Portuguese saw their defeat as a punishment from Allah, kept the responsibility on the nobles and clergy who didn't know how to limit the rush of “Don Sebastian” due to his young age and lack of experience, despite of that the Portuguese consecrated that prince, and sanctified him and made him similar to the Awaited Mahdi, and the poet “Fernando Pessoa” immortalized the name of Don Sebastian in a poem entitled by his name which carried this meaning:

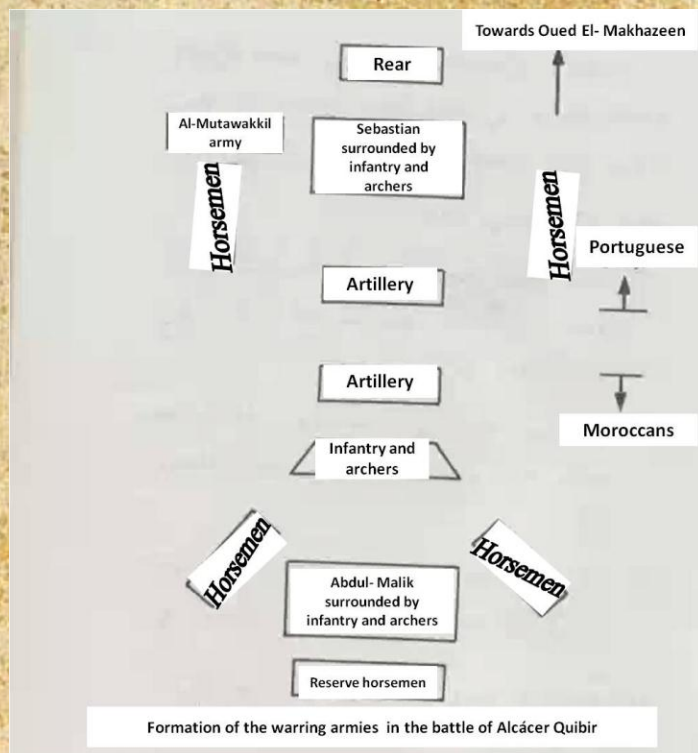
(Portuguese poetry)

Let it be the tragedies of sands, death and misery

I won't care less as long as I'm in the Lord's care

Since that means I will certainly return

So the king according to that mythical belief didn't die in the battle of Alcácer Quibir, but he is still a captive held by the Moroccans in a faraway island, and from that island he will return, to liberate his people⁽⁵⁾.



Leaders of the battle:

History is a witness for the greatness, bravery of Abdul-Malik Al-Mu'tasimbi'llah and his brother Ahmed El-Mansour, and it is also a witness for several commanders who had a prominent role in achieving the glorious triumph, and the battle's end with an outstanding victory in the history of Islam, and the death of three kings.

But there is a big difference in their end:

The first king: a slain crusader, "Don Sebastian" who was indisputably king of the greatest empire on earth at that time then.

The second king: a skinned drowned traitor, Abu Abdullah Mohammed Al-Mutawakkil, who was giving the Portuguese the best opportunity to interfere in Morocco, by promising to hand over to him the Moroccan shores, in return for his assistance.

The third king: a martyr – Allah willing – hero who passed away, Abdul-Malik Al-Mu'tasimbi'llah, Al-Mu'tasimbi'llah tried to take Morocco from the frequent customs, introduce it to the institutional, and some sources confirm that Abdul-Malik used to himself stay up to melt down the iron that is used in the arms industry.

As for king Ahmed El-Mansour, he was given Baya'a after the victory at Alcácer Quibir, after the end of the fighting in the battlefield, when he assigned the secretary Mohammed ibn Issa to

write the text of his Baya'a, then he gathered the senior commanders of the army and statesmen and nobles, and informed them about the death of his brother Al-Mu'tasim, and that he has taken power.

Chronological context that paved the way to the battle:

Every historical event should be kept in its historical context, and it remains ambiguous and hard to understand it properly, what is important to us regarding this event which we are dealing with now is search for its reasons that made Morocco and the crusader Portuguese aggression stand face to face:

In fact the end of the series began with the deterioration of the Marinid state in the 14th century, and it escalated with the loss of Ceuta to the Portugal since 1415, and the siege imposed by the Iberian states (Portugal and Spain).

As well as the decline and incurable internal problems of the Moroccan state in that period, and we were very far from the Almohad state which its prestige prevailed over the whole west Mediterranean, and also the frontlines of the Christian Spaniards.

Also the 10th century A.H. / 16th century A.D. witnessed a strong conflict between three empires: the Ottoman Turks, Spaniards, and then Portugal, to control and seize the Mediterranean.

The conflict concentrated since the middle of that century in North Africa, and in the land of Al-Maghreb Al-Aqsá in particular, when the Ottomans tried to annex Morocco to ensure the boundaries of the Ottoman Khilafah, then using the location of Morocco to attack Western Europe.

The ambitions of the Spaniards and Portugal headed towards Morocco since the first victories they achieved in Andalusia in the so called "Reconquista", and their interest in Morocco increased after the geographical explorations and their expansion marine navigation, and the land of Morocco attractive for its riches, agriculture, minerals and trade routes towards Black Africa, and its strategic location overlooking the Mediterranean on one side and the Atlantic Ocean on the other.

Hence appeared the Portuguese initiative to prepare to attack Morocco, and attempting to crush the emerging Saadi power.

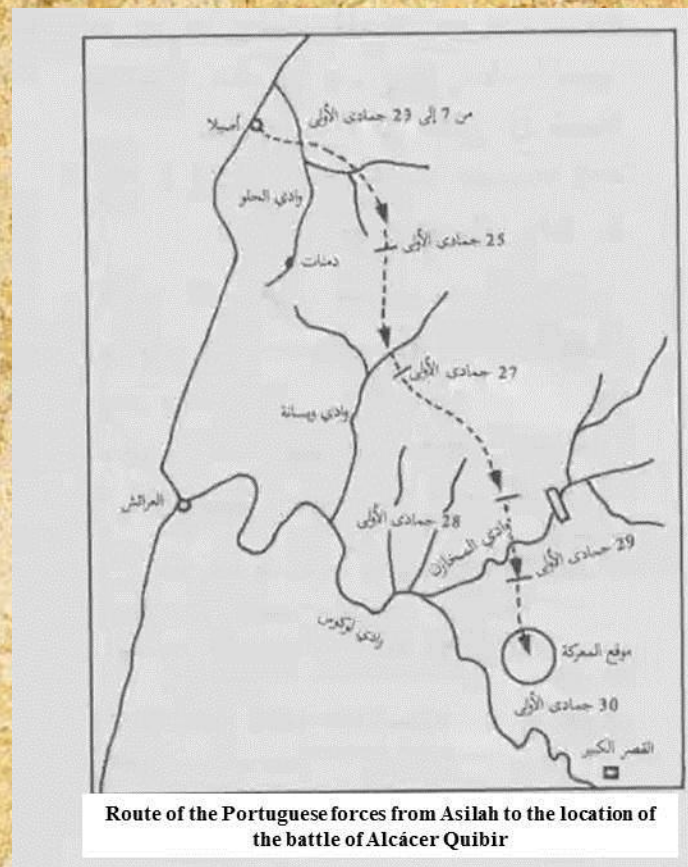
Reasons for the outbreak of the battle:

Many historians emphasize that Mohammed Al-Mutawakkil who was deposed from the Saadi throne request of assistance from "Don Sebastian son of John III" and seeking protection and

help against his uncle Abu Marwan Abdul-Malik – was the main reason for the Portuguese military campaign against Morocco, which led to the Battle of Alcácer Quibir, and by that the historians bear the traitor Mohammed Al-Mutawakkil responsible for the campaign of the crusader “Sebastian” against Morocco.

On the other hand, the documents shown by Henri de Castries in the “Original sources of the Moroccan history” collection confirms that 978 A.H. / 1570 A.D. sets the beginning of the project of the Portuguese campaign against Morocco, which means: eight years before sending it, and the enthusiasm for the project of that campaign revived, when Sebastian visited Ceuta and Tangier, the most important centers of the Portuguese occupation in Morocco in 982 A.H. / 1574 A.D.

There were also contacts to involve volunteers from the European countries, so many Germans, English, Italians and Austrians joined the campaign, as well as Spaniards, which gave the campaign a crusader character, which was blessed and encouraged by the Pope.



Before the battle:

Abdul-Malik choose Ksar El-Kebir as headquarters, and assigned some who watched Sebastian and his army carefully, then he wrote to Sebastian to lure him: "I have come to you crossing 16 Marhalas (Ancient Arabic unit of measurement), can't you cross one Marhala to meet me", but he was advised by Al-Mutawakkil and his men not to leave Asilah, to be in contact with the supplies, equipment and the sea, but he refused the advice, so he moved heading towards Ksar El-Kebir, until he reached the bridge of Oued El-Makhazeen, where settled opposite of the Moroccan army, and in the night Abdul-Malik ordered his brother Ahmed El-Mansour with a brigade from the army to blow up the bridge of Oued El-Makhazeen and that was the only bridge to cross that river.

The two armies faced each other with the artillery, and after that the infantry archers and the horsemen on the sides, and the Muslims army had a popular volunteers force, as well as a constellation of reserve horsemen who will attack in the right moment.

Participants in the battle, different estimates:

The historians differed in their estimates about the number of participants in the Portuguese campaign, a Spanish report stated that the Portuguese king left Lisbon with 487 ships from different types carrying 24,000 soldiers, including 3000 horsemen, and the rest were infantry, and according to the Moroccan historians the Portuguese campaign was between 60,000 to 125,000 fighter with their equipment, and the least figure mentioned was 80,000, including 20,000 Spaniards, 3000 Germans, 7000 Italians, with thousands of horsemen, and more than 40 cannons, under the leadership of young king Sebastian, and with them was Al-Mutawakkil with a platoon ranging between 300 - 600 at the most.

As for the Moroccan army, it was led by Abdul-Malik Al-Mu'tasimbi'llah, it consisted from 40000 Muslim Moroccan mujahid, having strong Iman and superiority in horsemen, their cannons were only 34, as well as forces sent by the Pasha of Algeria to repel the Portuguese invasion, on the orders of the Ottoman sultan Murad III, which were estimated of 4000 or 5000 Turks.

But always we remember the saying of the Almighty: (How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allah's permission, and Allah is with the patient) 249 Surah Al-Baqara.

Yes, a small, believing, sincere party humiliates the largest army in the world in that period.

Yes, the battle between two falsehoods, so there is a worthy victory and an obliged victory, and a universal victory if the two warring parties were away from Allah – Almighty – so the stronger wins, the one who has the most modern cannons wins, the one who has the ability of accurate aiming wins, the one who owns warplanes wins, but when there is Iman and Kufr, then believer wins.

Starting of the battle:

On Monday morning 30 Jumada Al-Akhira 986 A.H. corresponding 4 August 1578, sultan Abdul-Malik inciting the army to fight, and the monks and priests did their best in raising the enthusiasm of the soldiers of Europe, reminding that the Pope forgave the sins and burdens for the souls who are killed in this war.

Tens of bullets were fired from both sides to announce the beginning of the battle, and despite of the deterioration of sultan Abdul-Malik health which disease accompanied him on the way from Marrakech to Ksar El-Kebir, he came out by himself to repel the first attack, by the disease overwhelmed him, so he returned to his stretcher, and it was only moments before he passed away, and he died with his forefinger on his mouth indicating to conceal the matter until the victory occurs, so that there be no disorder, and indeed it was so and no one knew of his death except his chamberlain and his brother Ahmed El-Mansour, and his chamberlain began saying to the soldiers: "The sultan orders this one to go to that location, and that person to hold on to the banner, and this one to advance, and that to retreat", and there is a narration that Al-Mutawakkil poisoned his uncle Abdul-Malik before the confrontation, to die in the battle, so there would be a Fitnah in the Moroccans camp.

Ahmed El-Mansour attacked with the vanguard the Portuguese rear and ignited the Portuguese powder, and also there was an attack against the archers, so the Portuguese couldn't stand firm due to the shock, and some of them were killed in the battlefield, and the rest escaped towards the bridge of Oued El-Makhazeen river, but they didn't find it, it has been blown up by the Muslims, so they throw themselves in to the river, and many of them drowned, and others were captured and killed.

Sebastian was killed and thousands around him, after he showed steadfastness and bravery, the traitor Al-Mutawakkil tried to escape north, but he fell and drowned in the Oued El-Makhazeen river, and they found his body floating on the water, and he was flayed and filled with hay and it was passed throughout Morocco until it ruptured and decayed.

The battle lasted for four hours and twenty minutes, and the victory wasn't a coincidence, but for the high moral, and the souls that felt responsibility, and a firm studied plan.

Results of the battle of Alcácer Quibir:

- The battle of Alcácer Quibir takes a place in the long conflict between Islam and Christianity, in a time when the Islamic world appeared strong under the leadership of the Ottoman state in the eastern wing by confronting the Christian world represented by the imperial family of Austria, and winning in many occasions in impressive victories, we find it in the western wing suffering from some kind of weakness, since it adhered to negative defensive stances, the Moroccan victory in the battle of Alcácer Quibir came to return to Islamic Maghreb some of its prestige and raise the reputation of Morocco, and keep an end permanently to the crusader projects.

- The battle wrote a bright page for the Islamic Moroccan military, and proved to the Christian Europe that the land of Morocco is a graveyard for the invaders.
- Moulay Ahmed was the first to gain the fruits of the battle, by coming to power on the day of the battle, and he called himself “Al-Mansur’billah”.
- The weaponry of the Saadi army increased by what they seized from the enemy’s arms, also gold and silver coins flowed to the Saadi⁽⁷⁾ treasury in exchange for releasing the battles.
- Morocco gained a good reputation in the Islamic world, and prestige in the European Christian Europe, also delegations came to him to congratulate for the victory, and diplomatic missions to gain cordiality and friendship and good neighborliness.
- Portugal lost its independence and colonies, when it was occupied by Spain, due to the weakness of Portugal after the battle, and absence for a heir to the throne.

Even ‘Henry Terrace’ – the historian who is spiteful to Islam and Muslims, who showed a lot of reservation regarding the importance of the event – couldn’t restrain himself from acknowledging its serious implications on Europe, when he says: “The victory of Morocco against Portugal in one battle gave it the reputation of a big state, so the European courts made relations with it and sometimes asked for its help, and Abu Al-Abbas Ahmed benefited from that wrong estimation in Europe, and the battle of three kings had an impact in giving an exaggerated view about the Saadi state even in the time of its deterioration”.

والله أعلم وأحكم، وصلى الله وسلم وبارك على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

- 1) Oued El-Makhazeen: One of the creeks of the Loukkos river which disemboque in the city of Larache (located north west of Morocco).
- 2) Mohammed Zinbir, "Battle of Three Kings, Memories from the Moroccan heritage", part three: Empowerment of the state to the risks, pg. 174, edited.
- 3) "Battle of Oued El-Makhazeen", Sheikh Nasser bin Mohammed Al-Ahmed.
- 4) Ahmad ibn Mohammed Al-Maqqari, "Rawdat Al-Aas Al-Atira fi Zikr man Laqitiho min Aalam Al-Hadratain Marrakech wa Fas", The Royal Press, Ribat, second edition, 1983.
- 5) Abdulmajeed Kaddouri, "Morocco and Europe between the 15th and 18th century (The issue of overrunning)", pg. 175, edited.
- 6) Ibrahim Ali Hassan, "Ahmed El-Mansour Eddahbi", Unforgotten men in the history of Morocco, Al-Najaa Al-Jadeed Press, Casablanca, first edition, 1403 A.H. / 1987, pg. 35 – 36, slightly edited.
- 7) An attribution to the Saadi dynasty that ruled Morocco in that era.

8 Shaban 1434 A.H.